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NEWARK RECEIVES AWARD FROM U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
MAYOR JAMES USES OCCASION TO ISSUE CALL FOR NATIONAL 'BOTTLE
BILL'

Washington, D.C., May 15, 1991 -- Newark, New Jersey

Mayor Sharpe James today accepted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) first annual Administrator's Award for local government. The award recognizes the City's recycling program as the best sponsored by an American municipality.

EPA Administration William K. Reilly presented the award to the Mayor at the agency's headquarters in Washington, D.C. Accepting, James noted that more than half of Newark's municipal waste was recycled in 1990, thus helping the city to avoid \$4.78 million in disposal costs.

"The great problems plaguing our land, water and air built up slowly due to actions taken in cities and towns everywhere," James said. "Just as these same cities and towns served as the source of our problems, they must also serve as the source of solutions.

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Bottle Bill

"This 'think globally, act locally' philosophy has given us the resolve to take action in addressing Newark's environmental problems. Our comprehensive recycling efforts are indicative of this," he noted.

Reilly said that each American generates about four pounds of garbage per day, double the amount generated 20 years ago and more than America's major economic competitors, Germany and Japan. "EPA set a national goal of recycling 25 percent of municipal solid waste by 1992, and we have a lot yet to do if we are to be competitive." he added.

"The efforts of the people we honor today, together with the efforts of countless other Americans, are going to help this country make a big dent in our waste pile."

In presenting Newark's award, Reilly cited Newark's recycling rate as "one of the highest in the nation" and listed the "innovative aspects" of the City's recycling program. These include: requiring the recycling of ozone-depleting compounds, deputizing youth as special recycling assistants to the Mayor, and "precycling" by purchasing recycled and recyclable goods.

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Bottle Bill

At a reception following the EPA ceremony, James announced his support for a national beverage container deposit law proposed by Rep. Paul Henry (R-Michigan). The law, which would require a deposit on plastic, glass and aluminum beverage containers, is designed to ensure that consumers return containers for recycling.

James said that a national bottle bill would provide American consumers with an economic incentive to recycle, which would help increase recycling rates dramatically. He added that beverage container deposit legislation would raise the recovery rate for plastic beverage containers to well over 60 percent, and the rate for glass and metal containers to between 80 and 90 percent.

"Mandatory recycling, as we have it in New Jersey, is important, but our efforts cannot stop there," James said. "It is not a question of mandatory recycling or a bottle bill."

James said that the U.S. Conference of Mayors Solid Waste Task Force, which he co-chairs, has prepared a resolution endorsing the deposit bill. He urged the audience to join the conference in supporting the legislation.